

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE PLAN DEVELOPMENT



June 2003

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Safe and Healthy Schools
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Components of a School Discipline Plan

A school discipline plan complying with Act 113 of 2000 must include the components listed in section 6 of the Act. As each component is discussed in this document, suggestions are given to assist those responsible for preparing local plans. Appendices are used to provide additional suggestions and examples of specific plan components. The Act does not require that schools use particular approaches to any of the issues discussed in the examples or appendices to this document. The examples and appendices are illustrative only.

Introduction

School discipline plans tend to describe what will be done to positively intervene in the variety of challenging, disruptive, and sometimes, volatile student behaviors confronted by educators in their classrooms and schools. The specification of positive intervention procedures and practices is a necessary component of any school discipline plan. However, a genuinely proactive and effective discipline plan comprehensively identifies the systemic and classroom strategies that will be employed to **prevent challenging behaviors** from occurring in the first place. This includes the professional development activities that will be engaged in to build school capacity and support prevention efforts.

Best practices research and our own experience support the view that an effective school discipline plan contains a clearly articulated prevention component. Simply stated: it is much easier to prevent challenging behavior than to change such behavior after the fact. A well conceived discipline plan helps educators to anticipate and avoid challenging behavioral events in a fashion which leads to what all of us espouse that students should be able to demonstrate – responsibility, self-discipline, and community.

Achieving this result infers that discipline (as connoted by its Latin root) is viewed as an opportunity to help students learn a set of skills rather than an opportunity to do something to them and their parents or guardians. Students who chronically misbehave have often suffered all of the punishments and extrinsic rewards that schools and sometimes home environments have to offer. The profiles of these students are ordinarily case studies in low self-esteem, inappropriate peer relationships, family discord and violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and exposure to overly materialistic, sexually exploitive forms of mass media. Similarly, parents and guardians of these students have frequently been disenfranchised and marginalized by numerous social institutions including schools. To believe that punitive practices and extrinsic rewards can effectively prevent or respond to such circumstances is not supported theoretically or practically.

In turn, as concerns individuals (students and adults alike) and school climate in general, educators can benefit from exposure to professional development activities that help them gain a working knowledge of what motivates behavior (i.e., the human needs for belonging, mastery, independence and generosity). They can also benefit from learning how to create educational environments that help fulfill these basic human needs. And of course positive, individual, behavior change and the strengthening of school climate require long-term commitment and the courage to critically and creatively examine current practices.

Statement of School Discipline Philosophy

Act 113 requires that school discipline plans describe approaches to classroom management and responses to disruptive behavior. A clear statement of discipline philosophy is one way to enable a school to respond consistently to student misconduct. Generally, a philosophy statement will be developed, reviewed and endorsed by school staff, the school board, community members, and representatives of parents or parent groups. To be successful, it must be widely understood and supported. Philosophy statements are comprised of three primary elements: defining characteristics, purpose, and conditions of learning. [Appendix A](#) offers both blank and completed Discipline Philosophy Worksheets that can help ensure these elements are included in a philosophy statement.

School discipline philosophies often include the following principles:

- Parents play a primary role in making a school discipline system successful.
- Students are responsible for their actions.
- Students must respect the rights of others to attend a safe and orderly school.
- Students must understand the consequences of both positive and negative behavior.
- The goal of school discipline is to foster self-control and a sense of community within and among students.
- All students can learn and practice skills essential to self-discipline.

[Appendices B, C, and D](#) are examples of school discipline philosophy statements currently in place in Vermont schools.

School-wide Rules

Clearly stated school rules are important for several reasons. Clear school-wide rules help students understand the misconduct for which they will be held accountable. School rules are also important because they guide the establishment of rules for discrete school environments, such as classrooms and common areas.

Some Vermont supervisory unions have developed philosophy statements and uniform rules for elementary, middle and high schools. To eliminate uncertainty about the behavioral expectations for all students, school rules are posted throughout the school and students are regularly reminded of them.

Rule-following behaviors are most likely to occur when students are involved in the development of school and classroom rules. Such involvement enables students to understand how the rules benefit them as individuals and/or as a school community. This understanding is necessary to build self-discipline, responsibility, and a sense of community. The latter is critical because too many students ordinarily ask one of two questions when affirmation of their school community is lacking: “What will happen to me if I do this?” or, “what will happen to me if I don’t?” The emphasis is on “me, me, me” with little recognition or appreciation that their behaviors affect others.

The fostering of rule-following behaviors also depends upon numerous, year-long opportunities for the teaching and learning of school and classroom rules across the curriculum. This implies a

variety of strategies including modeling, role-play, practice in real settings, frequent feedback, and periodic assessment.

[Appendix E](#) is a statement of school rules from the Dothan Brook School Discipline Program.

Rules for Specific School Areas

Classrooms, school buses, libraries, auditoriums, playgrounds, and cafeterias typically require distinct rules of conduct. Rules for specific areas are prepared early in the school year, often on the first day of school, and usually with input from students. Rules for specific areas are reviewed regularly with students, and are prominently displayed.

[Appendix F](#) is a statement of rules for specific areas from the discipline plan of the Northfield Schools.

- Development of Alternative Learning Environments
- Time Away or Time Out
- Student Support
- Planning Room
- In School Suspension
- Alternative Classroom or School
- Creative Ideas

When alternative settings or programs are part of the school's discipline system, the discipline plan of the school addresses them. The plan identifies the criteria for referring and assigning students to those settings or programs and the processes to be followed when making or altering those assignments.

Alternatives need not be compulsory and may range in nature from "supervised study" rooms to educational programs in off-campus locations. School officials may permit students to select alternative programs or settings voluntarily or a student may be placed in an alternative program or setting for a period of time as a disciplinary measure.

For example, a school discipline plan may include provisions on alternative settings similar to the following.

Two alternatives are available for students who can benefit from educational environments outside the regular classroom.

The _____ program is for students who will be more successful in a smaller educational environment. In the _____ program students are responsible for planning many of their own activities, including activities that are community based. An application process administered by the Educational Support Team determines admission to the _____ program. Interested students can apply in _____ for admission in the following school year.

Students whose behavioral needs warrant placement in the supervised study room will follow the procedures required by the school board policy on discipline. In

general, a student may be referred to the supervised study room by the principal or his or her designee for failure to cease any misconduct that significantly disrupts a classroom or other school setting. An assignment to the supervised study room will be of short duration, generally less than a full school day. While in the supervised study room, the student will be given sufficient academic work to allow him or her to successfully return to the classroom at the end of the assignment.

The supervised study room will not be used when a student's misconduct requires an out-of-school suspension, except when the out-of-school suspension is to begin on the day following a one-day assignment to the supervised study room. The due process provisions of the school board policy on student discipline will apply to any suspension.

Given that the goal of almost every alternative program is to successfully reintegrate students into the regular educational environment, it is important to build reciprocal relationships between them. This infers opportunities for alternative and regular school staff to meet with one another, visit and observe in each other's learning environments, team teach, and share strategies that are effective in preventing and responding to challenging behavior.

Consistent Responses to Student Misconduct

Act 113 requires the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive plan for responding to student misbehavior. [Appendix G](#) describes a "Three-level System" for ensuring consistent responses to student misconduct. It also includes suggested approaches to prepare school staff for its effective use and informing students and parents about its components.

[Appendix G](#) suggests utilizing "behavior support staff" and a "crisis response team" in specific situations. Behavior support staff will typically include an assistant principal or guidance counselor. A crisis response team may include other specialists such as a school psychologist. The "Three-level System" in [Appendix G](#) also assigns responsibility for responding to specific types of student misconduct to (1) "teachers or supervising adults," (2) "teachers and behavior support staff," and (3) "school administrators." These and other elements of [Appendix G](#) are not specifically required by Act 113 but a school's comprehensive plan for responding to student misbehavior answers the following questions.

1. What are the obligations of responsible adults to respond to specific incidents of student misconduct?

A school discipline plan statement on the responsibility of adults to respond in certain ways to particular types of student misconduct might be similar to the following.

School staff will respond to minor misconduct in settings over which they have supervisory responsibility such as classrooms, study halls or lunchrooms by immediately following the protocols outlined in the staff handbook. Minor misconduct generally includes behaviors such as failure to remain on task in a classroom, failure to follow an adult's instructions, and disrupting an activity by interrupting the teacher or other students. Minor misconduct is not referred to

administrators or behavior support staff unless efforts by the teacher to redirect the student result in further disruption.

Teachers and other supervising adults may respond to continuing minor misconduct by referring students to members of the behavior support staff. The contact person for referrals to the behavior support staff is _____. Referrals may result in short term placement in a planning room or consideration of other interventions by the behavior support staff. Students whose individual plans require specific interventions in response to misconduct will be subject to those interventions and will not be removed to alternative settings without consultation with responsible administrators unless the student's behavior poses an immediate danger.

Teachers and other supervising adults must make a timely referral to the principal of any student who engages in significant misconduct. Significant misconduct includes chronic violations of school or class rules; drug or alcohol possession use or sale; serious verbal threats or harassment; substantial damage to property; physical aggression; and weapons possession or use.

2. How will school officials inform responsible adults of their responsibilities under the discipline system adopted by the school?

One individual at each school should be responsible for ensuring that every adult who is expected to prevent or respond to student misconduct has been given sufficient information to enable him/her is to meet that responsibility.

The school's discipline plan assigns responsibility for planning in-service activities to the principal, assistant principal or other administrator in collaboration with faculty and staff. Staff development time and resources are periodically dedicated to this function. The plan indicates who will formulate and schedule periodic events intended to communicate this information and what sources of funds will be used to finance these activities.

A school's discipline plan statement that informs adults of their responsibilities might include a paragraph similar to the following.

The principal will inform teachers and other staff of their responsibilities under the school discipline program. When staff members are initially employed they will receive copies of the staff and student handbooks and will be instructed by the principal or assistant principal on the protocols to follow when encountering student misconduct. Prior to the beginning of each school term in-service time will be devoted to reviewing the disciplinary responsibilities of all staff.

3. How will school officials inform parents and students about the school's responses to specific types of misconduct?

The discipline plan of the school must be clearly communicated to parents and students. This can be accomplished through a combination of activities. Minimally this includes publication of the plan in a student/parent handbook and programs at the school designed to discuss the plan with students and their parents. The plan includes a statement explaining how its contents will be

communicated to students and parents. This statement specifies who is responsible for distributing this information when students enroll during the school year.

A school discipline plan statement on providing information to students and parents might include a paragraph similar to this one.

The student handbook includes a complete statement of the discipline policies of the school. Each student is given a handbook at the beginning of the school year or, if a student enrolls during the school year, upon enrollment. Students are asked to take the handbook home and review it with their parents. Parents are asked to return signed statements to the school indicating they have reviewed the discipline section of the handbook with their children.

At least annually, as part of the school's annual open house or school report night, a forum is held for interested parents and community members to discuss the discipline plan with school administrators and staff. The principal will notify parents of this event as part of the notice sent to them announcing the open house or school report night.

The school's discipline plan is available at the school office during normal business hours for review by any interested community member.

4. How will appropriate training and instruction be provided to students on methods of conflict resolution, peer mediation and anger management?

A school discipline plan identifies the programs and activities designed to help students learn the skills necessary to be a responsible member of the school community. This might include opportunities to learn anger management, conflict resolution, mediation, and social skills. It should be noted that research indicates conflict resolution, mediation, and social skills are more effective when learned in combination with one another rather than in isolation. A discipline plan statement on providing the above opportunities to students might include a paragraph similar to the following.

The school provides opportunities for all students to learn anger management, conflict resolution, mediation and social skills. The _____(person responsible) coordinates instructional and non-instructional activities of the school to ensure that students are provided with these opportunities as part of their school day as well as during after school activities.

5. How will the school inform parents about disciplinary action involving their children?

In order to support disciplinary actions of the school and help their children understand the importance of positive behavior at school, parents must be partners in the discipline process and know when and why school officials will contact them regarding the discipline of their children. Creating such partnerships and successfully communicating with parents requires a working knowledge of family centered practices as described in [Appendix H](#). The school discipline plan informs staff members of any responsibilities they have to contact parents directly or to refer incidents to others for parental contact. A school discipline plan might include paragraphs similar to the following on this subject.

Not every incident of misconduct warrants parental contact. Staff members will contact parents when changing a student's behavior requires parental support but does not warrant intervention by an administrator.

The principal or his/ her designee will contact parents when the student's misconduct is severe (as defined by the school's code of behavior) or becomes chronic. The principal will develop a form to be sent to parents for this purpose. The form explains to parents the nature of the misconduct and invites parents to contact appropriate personnel for further information. Other means of communicating with parents that protect confidentiality are also used as necessary.

When a student is subjected to short-term suspension out of school and it is necessary to send the student home before the end of a school day, the parents of the student will be contacted by telephone or by other means. If a responsible adult is not available to supervise the student at home, the student will remain at school until the end of the school day. Parents of a student who is suspended from school for 10 days or less will be offered an informal hearing with the principal or his/her designee in accord with the school board's discipline policy and state board of education rule. Except in situations involving immediate threats to a student or others, or immediate threats to school property or the school environment, the informal hearing will take place prior to the suspension.

Long term suspensions of more than 10 days or expulsions are preceded by formal notice to parents and a hearing in accord with the requirements of due process as stated in the school board's discipline policy and state law.

6. How will school officials respond to significant threats or crisis situations?

A superintendent or principal may, subject to subsequent due process procedures established by school board policy, remove immediately from school a pupil whose continued presence is harmful to the school or who poses a continuing threat of disrupting the academic process of the school. A superintendent or principal may also recommend for expulsion a student who brings a weapon to school. *See* 16 V.S.A. § 1162(a).

The Vermont Safe Schools Partnership has developed a guide to crisis response for schools. The guide, "School Crisis Response Procedures," is available from the Vermont School Boards Association. It includes descriptions of procedures to follow in crisis situations ranging from the death of a student to bomb threats and weapons offenses. The guide also includes information on creating a school "crisis response team" (also referred to as a crisis "support" or "helping" team).

A crisis helping team is a group of trained individuals who can respond to and support students through a behavioral crisis in a manner that preserves the safety and dignity of all involved. In small schools the team may be comprised of two or three individuals, while in larger schools six to ten may be necessary. Crisis teams respond to incidents ranging from severe student disruption to violent misconduct.

The school discipline plan might state that, in circumstances warranting action by the crisis helping team, the principal or other designated administrator will follow the protocols

established by the School Crisis Response Procedures guidebook. The plan should also make the principal or another individual responsible for recruiting members of the crisis helping team and preparing them to function effectively. Preparation typically includes training and ongoing practice in behavior management, de-escalation skills, supportive physical intervention, and procedures for making referrals to social service and law enforcement agencies.

7. How will the school respond to off-campus misconduct?

Students may be disciplined for misconduct that occurs away from school when a sufficient connection between the misconduct and the legitimate interests of the school can be shown. The following suggested explanation of the grounds and procedures for such discipline or a similar explanation must be part of the school's discipline plan.

School authorities may discipline a student for misconduct that does not occur on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be shown. For purposes of this plan, such misconduct is referred to as "off-campus misconduct." When discipline for off-campus misconduct is necessary to protect the safety and well-being of other students, teachers or school property or the student's own physical or emotional safety, or when the misconduct has a direct and immediate tendency to subvert the authority of the school by encouraging disorder or insubordination, discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion for the remainder of the school year or up to 90 school days whichever is longer may be imposed.

Examples of off-campus conduct that impacts on the school and may result in disciplinary action include but are not limited to:

1. possession, consumption or sale of illegal substances;
2. harassment;
3. hazing;
4. criminal conduct; and
5. violations of rules governing eligibility to participate in school sponsored activities.

When suspensions or expulsions are imposed for off-campus misconduct, the same procedural safeguards will be afforded students as are afforded students subjected to suspensions or expulsions for misconduct at school or school sponsored activities.

After consultation with the principal or his/her designee, a faculty activity-sponsor or coach may make rules (e.g., training rules) governing eligibility to participate in an activity. Students may be required to show that they have discussed the eligibility rules with their parents or guardians prior to participating in an activity. For example, parents may be asked to sign a form indicating that they are aware of the rules governing participation in the activity.

Participants in school sponsored activities, members of athletic teams or clubs, and students planning to attend field trips may be barred or suspended from those activities or otherwise disciplined by school authorities for off-campus misconduct that violates the rules governing participation in those activities.

8. What procedures will apply to misconduct resulting in suspension from school sponsored activities?

As stated above, special rules of conduct may apply for students to participate in school-sponsored activities. For example, athletic teams may be subject to training rules and exchange clubs may subject students to rules governing participation in their activities. A school discipline plan should indicate how alleged infractions of these rules are resolved.

An informal appeal process should be part of the school's overall plan. The plan should provide an opportunity for a student and an administrator or other responsible school personnel to discuss a suspension from an activity in a manner similar to the opportunity provided for short-term suspensions from school. The following are suggested procedures that describe an appeal process.

A student who is barred or suspended from participation in school sponsored activities due to misconduct, but is not suspended from school, may appeal the action to the principal. The principal or, if the principal is not available, his/her designee, will discuss the circumstances of the action and the allegations of misconduct with the student and, if requested by the student or parent, with the student's parents or guardian within ____ hours of the action. The principal may ask others who have relevant information to be present for the discussion. The suspension will remain in effect until the principal has discussed the incident with the student and has explained his/her decision to the student.

If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the principal, the student may ask the superintendent to review the decision. Within _____ days of the request, the superintendent will provide the student and the student's parents or guardian with an opportunity to present their version of the incident and the opportunity to solicit relevant information from others who have knowledge of the allegations of misconduct or of factors that should be considered in deciding whether the action should be upheld. The superintendent will explain his/her decision to the student as soon as possible after meeting with the student, and will provide a written decision if requested to do so by the student or the student's parents or guardian. Unless otherwise determined by the superintendent due to unusual circumstances, the action will remain in effect until the superintendent makes a decision. The superintendent's decision will be final.

Appendix A

Discipline Philosophy Development Worksheet

Please consider and write your responses to the following statements and/or select those portions of your current philosophy that respond to the statements below.

1. Child behavior management and discipline is/consists of...
2. The purpose of learning behavior management and discipline concepts, skills and content is...
3. Students best learn behavior management and discipline concepts, skills and content when/by...

Discipline Philosophy Development Worksheet

Please consider and write your responses to the following statements and/or select those portions of your current philosophy that respond to the statements below.

1. Child behavior management and discipline is/consists of...
 - A. Preserving and respecting the dignity and self-worth of each individual
 - B. Mutual respect
 - C. Direction from adults in making (learning how to make) appropriate choices
 - D. Students understand school rules and why they exist
2. The purpose of learning behavior management and discipline concepts, skills and content is...
 - A. Commitment to safe learning environment
 - B. Promote positive behavior
 - C. Students are responsible for their own behavior and make appropriate choices
3. Students best learn behavior management and discipline concepts, skills and content when/by...
 - A. Students are valued and appreciated
 - B. All individuals in the school community play a part in creating a positive school climate
 - C. Students have the opportunity to meet and learn how to meet their basic needs for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity

Appendix B

A Sample Statement of Philosophy from the Northfield School Discipline Plan

Statement of Beliefs

We believe that everyone can learn and help others learn.
As a caring and responsible community we will:

Strive For Excellence
Give Respect
Have Dignity
Take Responsibility

Everyone needs to contribute positively to an active learning environment.

Discipline Philosophy

Discipline will be consistent and support a safe atmosphere with respect for the dignity of all. To create positive learning environments everyone will be responsible for his/her own behaviors and the consequences. The entire school community, both adults and children will participate in and support the discipline procedures. Families and community will play an active role in promoting the discipline philosophy.

Appendix C
A Sample Statement of Philosophy from the Dothan Brook School
Discipline Program

Mission Statement

The Dothan Brook School community of students, staff, and parents is committed to providing a physically and emotionally safe learning environments, fostering academic, social and emotional growth, and nurturing a sense of belonging in all its members.

Guiding Principles

The word discipline comes from the Latin word *discere* meaning, “to learn”. Discipline is a learning opportunity and a process that all students can learn to use independently. The goal of school discipline is to foster within students the essential internal controls to be successful in all aspects of their lives. At Dothan Brook School:

- Discipline will preserve the dignity of all individuals
- Appropriate behavior will be modeled by all staff
- Everyone will take responsibility for their actions
- Discipline fosters internal controls for student responsibilities
- Parents play a primary role in making the system work
- Rules will be clearly stated and consequence applied fairly and consistently
- Staff must consistently employ appropriate methods of classroom management
- Establishing, maintaining and restoring relationship is an essential part of the discipline process

Appendix D
A Sample Statement of Philosophy from Blue Mountain Union School
Discipline Plan

Philosophy:

At Blue Mountain Union School, we believe that all disciplinary practices and interactions must teach and promote responsibility, enhance the safety and educational environment of the school, foster respect, and maintain the dignity of one's self and others. BMU's Discipline - Long Range Plan is a continuous community effort that is characterized by the following core belief statements:

- All students will have the social skills necessary to become responsible members of the community;
- All students are responsible for their actions and will be informed of the consequences of both positive and negative behavior;
- All staff members will teach and model essential social skills;
- All staff members will participate in the establishment of a clear set of school wide and specific rules for the various environments (classroom, gym, auditorium/cafeteria, playground, bus, etc.) for which they are responsible;
- All BEST Team members are responsible for implementation, participation and ongoing analysis of the Discipline – Long Range Plan;
- All parents will play a primary role in the discipline process; and
- All community members will be invited to be active participants.

Based on the philosophy and core beliefs, the goals are to help students develop:

- responsibility;
- critical thinking skills;
- independence;
- pro-social expression of thoughts and feelings;
- pro-social and responsible decision making;
- the ability to identify emotional, social and behavioral consequences; and alternative behaviors and greater self-control

Appendix E

Dothan Brook School

School Rules:

1. We care about each other's feelings.

We are kind to others.
We respect others.
We respect ourselves.
We use appropriate and respectful language (I-Care language).
We listen to each other.
We don't use put-downs.
We don't bully others.
We don't tease others.
We don't scare, threaten, or intimidate others.

2. We keep others and ourselves safe.

We keep our hands and bodies to ourselves.
We stay in our own space.
We keep our bodies safe.
We keep our bodies and voices under control.
We play and work safely.
We don't hurt others.

3. We respect property.

We keep our school clean.
We use equipment appropriately.
We leave other people's things alone.
We do not damage property.

4. We are responsible for what we say and do.

We take responsibility for our actions.
We come to school.
We do our best.
We finish our work.
We are on time for our activities.
We use good manners.
We cooperate with others.
We resolve our conflict.
We apologize and make up for our mistakes.
We follow the bus rules.
We follow all school rules.

Appendix F Northfield Schools

Bus Rules

- Stay safely seated
- Elementary students in the front; middle/high school students in the rear
- No food or drinks
- Talk quietly using appropriate language
- RESPECT bus driver and follow his/her direction

Hallways/Lobbys

- A pass is needed except during passing times
- Use trash receptacles
- Walk in halls
- Do not block walkways
- Use appropriate language and contact

Study Hall Rules

- Have work or book to read
- Be respectfully quiet
- No personal stereos or games, i.e., video, boards or card games
- No food or drink
- Passes are needed to leave study hall
- No outside study halls

Appendix G The Three-level System

The Three-level Discipline System recognizes that consistent adult responses to low-level challenging behaviors (e.g., non-compliance, disruption, bullying, etc.) produces a positive school climate in which more serious infractions will be minimized.

Built on a foundation of prerequisite adult skills and system supports, the Three-level System is an explicit protocol to be used by adults when responding to student misconduct. It does not include an exhaustive list of every student infraction followed by concrete consequences. Instead, a range of student behavior is followed by appropriate adult responses with discretion based on the type of behavior. The Three-level System assigns responsibility for handling different levels of student behavior to specific adults.

Level One Behaviors: Primary Responsibility - Teacher or Supervising Adult

Student Behaviors	Supportive Teacher Behavior	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off task behaviors • Minor to moderate disruption • Inappropriate verbal interactions • Non-responsive to teacher direction • Inattention to classroom work • Unprepared for class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned ignoring • Interact (Privacy, eye contact, proximity) • Affirmation • Active listening • Change/modify task • Offer choice • Supportive guidance back to task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for recognition of achievement • Positive reinforcement for task completion and class cooperation • In-class time-out • Work completion during free time • Verbal behavior plan • Restitution • Loss of privileges • Parent notification/involvement • Failure of lesson
	Directive Teacher Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I" Statements • Script for limit setting <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are you doing? 2. What are you supposed to be doing? 3. What do you choose to do? (give two choices) 	

Level Two Behaviors: Primary Responsibility - Teacher and Behavior Support Staff

Student Behaviors	Teacher Behaviors	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include all Level One behaviors in which student remains non-compliant and disruptive to his/her or others learning or responsibilities • Level one or two behavior continues despite teacher intervention 	<p>Immediate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct student to prearranged location (neighboring classroom, planning room, time out room, other) • With ongoing student refusal, summon crisis team (last resort) <p>Follow-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach alternative behaviors • Educational support team/system referral • Counseling • Life-space Crisis Intervention • Consideration for Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the development of individual behavior plan • Restitution • Loss of privileges • Parent notification • Class failure

Level Three Behaviors: Primary Responsibility - School Administration

Student Behaviors	Teacher Behaviors	Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic violation of school or class rules • Serious verbal aggressions, harassment or threat • Drugs and alcohol possession or use • Serious damage to property • Serious physical altercations • Weapons possession, threat to use, or actual use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Administrator • Seek help of Crisis Support Team and other school wide supports • Participate in parent conferences and re-entry meetings • Provide work for in-school suspension • Referral for Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restitution • Home/School coordination and support • Interagency referral and planning • Short-term suspension (in or out of school) • Consideration for placement in alternative program • Long-term suspension • Expulsion • School failure

The Crisis Development Model of the Crisis Prevention Institute

The Crisis Prevention Institute, as part of its training, "Nonviolent Crisis Intervention" describes four stages of student misbehavior and suggests adult responses to each. The following chart, extracted from the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training program, describes the stages and is intended to guide the skills of educators for using the Three-level System.

Crisis Development	Staff Attitude
1. Anxiety - a noticeable increase or change in behavior, e.g., pacing, finger drumming, wringing of the hands, staring.	1. Supportive - an empathic, nonjudgmental approach attempting to alleviate anxiety
2. Defensive - the beginning stage of loss of (student) rationality. At this point an individual often becomes belligerent and challenges authority	2. Directive - an approach in which a staff member takes control of a potentially escalating situation by setting limits.
3. Acting Out - the total loss of control which often results in a physical acting out episode.	3. Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention - control and restraint techniques used to safely control an individual until s/he can regain control of his/her behavior. These techniques should be utilized as a last resort, when an individual presents a danger to self or others.
4. Tension Reduction - decrease in physical and emotional energy which occurs after a person has acted out, characterized by the regaining of rationality.	4. Therapeutic Rapport - an attempt to reestablish communication with an individual who is in the tension reduction stage.

In-Service Preparation for Implementing the Three-level System (See also: Preventing and Responding to School Disruption and Violence, page 8, by going to <http://www.state.vt.us/educ>, linking to "Programs and Services" and then to "Safe Schools".)

The Three-level System requires a common approach by all adults who interact with students. Differing levels of preparation are required, depending on the specific roles of responsible adults. For example, bus drivers and cafeteria staff should have a basic understanding of the system, while members of a crisis team should receive intensive preparation in order to implement crisis procedures.

School employees and other adults responsible for the supervision of students should receive annual in-service training on behavior management and de-escalation strategies; using the school's discipline system; understanding how student diversity affects discipline; and strategies for engaging students. The school's discipline plan should make the principal or his/her designee (in collaboration with faculty and other staff) responsible for planning the necessary in-service programs. In-service programs should include the following components at beginning and refresher levels.

A. Emotional Self-Regulation Strategies for Adults

When interacting with students who display aggressive behavior, it is not uncommon for adults to be provoked into mirroring the behaviors of the students. For example, if a student raises his voice, an adult might respond by raising his or hers. This reaction will often result in an escalation, rather than a reduction, in the aggressive behavior.

Adults can learn how to monitor and regulate their reactions to student misbehavior. This skill is a prerequisite to successfully responding to aggressive student misconduct. In order to respond successfully, adults must understand the following concepts:

- The cycle of student/teacher conflict
- Self regulation strategies
- Why adults become counter-aggressive

B. Motivations of Behavior: Why Students Act as They Do

In order to select short and long-term strategies that assist students in changing their behavior, educators can benefit greatly from understanding the underlying motivations that drive student behavior. Without such understanding, choosing certain prevention or intervention strategies can reinforce a student's self defeating behaviors or may be ineffective in changing the students long-term patterns of behavior.

Although there are immediate causes which give rise to behavior, more deeply seated basic needs comprise the driving factors for a behavior. These factors are often related to the basic needs of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. In-service training can help educators strengthen their understanding of these basic needs and their application to students, adults, and school climate.

C. Principles of Behavior Management

Once a responding adult has successfully regulated his or her own behavior, s/he will be able to lead the student back to task by discontinuing the rule-breaking behavior quickly.

Included among the behavior management strategies employed for this purpose are:

- Effective communication
- Positive affirmation
- Supportive and directive teacher behaviors and when to use each
- Physical proximity to student
- Providing student choices
- Understanding of how and when to access back-up supports

D. Using System Supports

It is imperative that all staff are familiar with the school wide discipline system and understand their role in interacting with students who violate school rules regardless of where the violation takes place. Staff are equally responsible for monitoring behavior outside of the classroom and checking misbehavior that happens in their presence.

Occasionally, an adult's intervention with a student will be ineffective or may escalate the situation even further. These are occasional, inevitable consequences of the adult - student relationship. When adult intervention is not effective in de-escalating the student's behavior the adult will need to rely on immediate system supports to be effective. All adults must understand when and which supports to use.

These supports include:

- Guidance, school counselor referral
- Involvement of administrative staff
- Out of classroom spaces
- School resource officer
- Crisis response team

Note: It can be equally ineffective to use such supports either too early or too late. The Three-level System explains when to use each of the above interventions.

E. Communication Strategies for Changing Student Behavior

Student misbehavior is often driven by intense emotional reactions to events in the student's life. Sometimes these events happen in school and sometimes during other parts of the student's day. Regardless of the source of the emotions, it is critically important for the student to understand how his/her behavior is driven by his/her feelings. To gain this understanding, students need opportunities to process their behavior with adults as soon as possible after a rule infraction and if possible, with the adult in whose presence the behavior occurred. This requires skill on the part of the adult to help guide the student to discover that his/her behavior is self-defeating and ultimately interferes with the student's success.

Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) is one strategy used by adults to help students change their behavior. Largely a counseling strategy, LSCI can be used by any adult with students who are at a point in their cycle of misbehavior in which they are ready to interact positively with an adult. The student interview (LSCI) is best accomplished by the adult in whose presence the behavior occurred as soon as the student's intense emotions have drained off. For some students this may be immediately after the behavior. Others will need some time to pass before they are ready. Sometimes effective interviews can be accomplished in minutes; however they often require longer periods of time. Therefore adults will need both the interview skills and the strategies for devoting the time to conduct the interviews. (For information concerning training in the foundations of LSCI contact Anne Dubie at adubie@zoo.uvm.edu or by calling (802) 656-5775.)

When a pattern of inappropriate behavior develops, a student may be referred to other school supports, such as the Educational Support Team, counseling services or participation in social skills training. If there are indications that a student is disabled and in need of Special Education or requires accommodations or modifications for participation in school activities, a referral to determine the individual needs of the student should be made. If the student is already eligible for Special Education, disciplinary procedures will be consistent with the requirements of the IDEA and corresponding state regulations.

The appropriate school personnel should consider the following supports when a pattern of misconduct is present.

- Functional Behavioral Assessment
- Individual Behavior Plan that substitutes for or builds on the regular discipline system
- Positive behavior supports and accommodations
- Modifications or accommodations to regular discipline system
- Placement outside the regular classroom
- Resource Room
- Special Class
- Alternative Class Programs

Appendix H

Family Centered Practices

Since parents and guardians are essential to the success of interventions aimed at meeting their child's and their own needs, our interactions with them must be family friendly. This is especially important for those families (who due to their own school experiences, cultural background, the way in which their socioeconomic status compares to that of school staff and other factors) feel disenfranchised from the school. While this appendix is not intended to be a primer on family-centered practices, a few family friendly tips may be helpful.

Schools benefit from having a systemized way for regularly sharing student success stories with individual families and students. These strategies respect and make use of multiple ways of contacting families consistent with their wishes and circumstances. Such a system of sharing success makes it much easier to talk with parents and guardians when there is a difficulty of which they should be informed and the need for a school-family partnership to address the difficulty.

Contacts with parents and guardians are optimally made by the person who has the best relationship with the family. When making such contact, efforts are extended to solicit the family's point of view and ideas and to share those of school personnel openly and directly and with sensitivity and tactfulness. Family members come away from such contact feeling that school personnel honor and value their strengths and the knowledge they have about their child and have practiced full disclosure. If a meeting of some kind is needed, the contact person can ask parents and guardians what they want to discuss, who they want to be involved, and where and when the meeting can best be held.

Information that is provided by the student can also be extremely helpful in determining how to best meet his/her needs. Student input in the problem-solving process can occur in a variety of informal and formal ways. Ordinarily these strategies rely on a positive relationship and direct contact with the student.

Again, this appendix is not intended to thoroughly discuss family-centered practices. However, implementing the above small steps may prove helpful in developing genuine school-family partnerships. These steps are reinforced and in some respects extended by the following sample letters/questionnaires to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students.

**Sample Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
Letter and Questionnaire**

(NOTE: The information asked for below may be gathered via an interview.)

Confidential

Date: _____

Dear _____:
(name of parent(s)/guardian(s))

As you know, we are interested in helping your child be more successful in school. We are hoping that you will help us by answering the questions below. **If you do not understand a question, please let _____ know and s/he will be glad to explain it.**
(name of person)

If you do not want to answer a question, just leave it blank.

Return this sheet to _____ as soon as you can.
(name of person)

Thanks very much for your help!

(name of person)

Parent/Guardian Questionnaire

1. What are your child's strengths?

2. What does your child like about school?

3. What would you like to be different about school for your child?

4. Is there anything you think s/he needs help with?
5. What makes you think this?
6. What do you think would be the best way of helping him/her?
7. Please tell us how your child gets along with other students and adults.
8. If we need to meet with you to help your child, who **should** be there?
9. Is there anyone you wouldn't want to be there?
10. What would you like to talk about?
11. What would be the best place to meet with you?

12. What time of day would be best for you?
13. What's the best way of contacting you? Telephone? Mail? Note Home? Other?

Sample Student Letter and Questionnaire**(NOTE: The information asked for below may be gathered via an interview.)****Confidential**

Date: _____

Dear _____:
(name of student)

As you know, we are interested in helping you be more successful in school. We are hoping that you will help us by answering the questions below. **If you do not understand a question, please let _____ know and s/he will be glad to explain it.**
(name of person)

If you do not want to answer a question, just leave it blank.Return this sheet to _____ as soon as you can.
(name of person)

Thanks very much for your help!

(name of person)**Student Questionnaire**

1. What are you good at?

2. What do you like about school?

3. What would you like to be different about school?

4. Is there anything you would like help with? Why do you think this?
5. How could we help you?
6. If we need to meet with you to help you, who should be there?
7. Is there anyone you wouldn't want to be there?
8. What do you want to talk about?

Appendix I

Code F1 (Mandatory)

Model School Board Discipline Policy

(NOTE: This document is part of the Vermont School Boards Association Policy Manual.)

Student Conduct and Discipline

Policy

It is the policy of the _____ School District to maintain a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment. In order to ensure that the school is free from hazing, harassment, bullying and other disruptive misconduct, a system of classroom and school management practices, supported by consistent, clear and fair disciplinary procedures, will be utilized.

The goal of this policy is to create an environment where the rules for student behavior are clearly stated, are understood and accepted by students and staff, and are applied in compliance with due process requirements. This policy is to be applied in conjunction with the school's overall discipline plan developed pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1161a.

Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each student to contribute to a safe and productive learning environment in the school by demonstrating respect and consideration for other students and adults. This includes complying with all policies and rules of conduct of the School District and individual classrooms.

Administrative Responsibilities

The Principal, in consultation with the educational staff will develop an overall discipline plan pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §1161a. The plan will include clear guidelines for student behavior. Behavioral expectations, and the consequences of misconduct, will be stated in the student handbook and other publications distributed to students and parents/guardians.

The rules of conduct will be distributed to, and discussed with, all students at the beginning of each school year in accord with procedures stated in the school discipline plan. Students will be instructed to share the student handbook with their parents. Copies of the handbook will be provided to parents or guardians in a manner determined by the Principal. The Principal may ask that parents sign a form indicating that they have reviewed the rules of conduct with their children. When new students enroll during the school year, they and their parents will be given copies of the rules of conduct as part of the pre-enrollment process.

The Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for carrying out discipline procedures conforming to the following guidelines.

1. A student may request a meeting with the Principal or his/her designee to review any disciplinary action, other than a suspension or expulsion, affecting the student. If requested, the Principal or designee shall hold an informal meeting to review the incident and to hear the views of the student and any other persons who may have information that the Principal or designee believes to be relevant to the circumstances. The Principal or designee shall issue a prompt decision to the student, which may be oral or written. Except as otherwise provided in this policy, the decision of the Principal will be final.

2. Suspension or expulsion of students shall be imposed in accordance with state and federal law and regulations, due process requirements, and the following rules and procedures:
 - a. The Principal or his/her designee may assign a student to in-school detention for up to 10 consecutive school days for any infraction of school rules. As provided in the school's overall discipline plan, students assigned to in-school detention will be provided with reasonable opportunities to complete academic assignments and to benefit from counseling or other activities designed to bring about improvements in their behavior.
 - b. A student who poses an immediate danger to persons or property or a significant threat of disrupting the academic process of the school shall be removed from the school or to a place within the school determined by the Principal, Superintendent or their designee to be sufficiently secure to ensure the safety of students and school personnel and the continuation of the academic process. The Superintendent or Principal or their designee shall notify the parent or guardian (without undue delay) of a student who is removed from school. If the parent, guardian or other responsible person designated as an emergency contact by the parent or guardian cannot be notified, the student will be detained at school or at another safe and secure setting for the remainder of the school day.
 - c. No student will be removed from school for more than the remainder of a school day unless the student and his/her parents are given an opportunity for an informal hearing pursuant to paragraph (d) of this policy. When immediate removal of a student is necessary prior to a hearing, the hearing shall be held as soon as possible following the removal.
 - d. The Superintendent or Principal may suspend a student from school for a period of 10 days or less for misconduct occurring on or off school grounds. Except as provided in paragraph (b) above, prior to such a suspension, the student and his/her parent or guardian shall be given an opportunity for an informal hearing with the Principal or his/her designee. The student and his/her parent or guardian must be given notice of the charges, an explanation of the evidence against the student, an opportunity for the student to tell his/her side of the story, and a decision in writing to the parent or guardian.
 - e. The Superintendent or Principal may, with the approval of the Board and in accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 1162(a), impose a long-term suspension or expulsion of a student (for longer than ten days and up to 90 school days or the remainder of the school year whichever is longer) for misconduct on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the student harmful to the welfare of the school.
 - f. In accord with the overall discipline plan developed under 16 V.S.A. § 1161a, short-term (ten days or less) or long-term suspension or expulsion may be imposed for misconduct not on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated.

- g. Long-term suspension or expulsion must be preceded by notice and formal due process procedures, including the opportunity for a hearing before the Board. The Superintendent shall notify the student and his/her parents in writing of the nature of the charges, the date, time and place of the hearing, the right to legal representation, and the disciplinary action to be recommended to the Board. This notice shall be provided in sufficient time to allow the student and his/her parents to prepare for the hearing. At the hearing, the student and parent/guardian shall be given an opportunity to present evidence and to cross-examine witnesses. The Board shall issue a written decision within ____ days of the conclusion of the hearing.
3. Notwithstanding the above provisions, a legal pupil who has a disability or is suspected of having a disability, and is eligible for special education services or Section 504 services may be removed from his/her current educational placement for disciplinary reasons for more than 10 consecutive days, or for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year only in accord with Vermont State Board of Education Rules 4313 or 4312. The school Principal, with the agreement of a special education administrator, may impose short-term disciplinary sanctions on special education students as provided in Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4313. The Superintendent and coordinator of special education will develop additional procedures as needed to govern the discipline of students with disabilities.
 4. In the event a student brings a weapon to school, the procedures set forth in the District's Weapons policy (F21) shall apply.

Date Warned:

Date Adopted:

Legal Reference(s): 16 V.S.A. §1161a (discipline)

16 V.S.A. §1162 (suspension and expulsion)

20 U.S.C. §§1400 et seq. (IDEA)

29 U.S.C. §794 (Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973)

VT State Board of Education Manual of Rules & Practices §4311, 4312, 4313

Cross Reference: Board Commitment to Non-Discrimination (C6)

Public Complaints about Personnel (D10)

Interrogations or Searches of Students by Law Enforcement

Officers or Other Non-School Personnel (F4)

Search and Seizure (F3)

Alcohol and Drug Abuse (F7)

Weapons (F21)